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ABSTRACT

This paper reports findings from a recent large-scale survey of PE teachers' perceptions of teaching dance and compares them to results of a study completed 10 years previously (MacLean, 2007). The current position of dance is examined in light of the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) in 2010, a national initiative in Scottish schools that provides a unified flexible curricular framework for children aged 3-18. Dance remains part of the PE curriculum but also for the first time in Scotland occupies an additional position within the Expressive Arts (EA). Teachers are positioned as agents of change tasked with greater autonomy, flexibility and responsibility in curriculum design. The inclusion of dance in both PE and EA provides potential for teachers to design curricula that excludes dance from the PE curriculum or alternatively use the opportunity to increase dance provision. Currently, little is known about the impact CfE has on the provision and position of dance or the factors that impinge on teachers' decisions regarding the inclusion of dance in the curriculum. To further such understanding, eighty- five secondary school PE teachers responded to a questionnaire concerning dance opportunities within the current school context. In addition, the original participants from MacLean (2007) research were reinterviewed to identify and explore the factors that enable teachers to achieve agency when teaching dance. The results indicated that collaborative planning, united goals and collective action had enabled teachers to significantly increase dance provision in schools. Teacher attention had shifted from concerns about individual capacity to a focus on the level of social, cultural and material support in providing valuable educational experiences in dance for all pupils.

Key Words:

Dance; Physical Education, Teacher Agency, Collective Agency, Policy Enactment

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), a national initiative in Scottish Schools, provides a unified curricular framework for children aged 3-18. Within this framework, Physical Education (PE) forms part of a collective alongside Physical Activity and Sport, within the newly created curricular area of Health and Wellbeing (HWB). Dance remains part of the PE curriculum but also, for the first time in Scotland, has the potential to occupy an additional position within the curricular area of Expressive Arts (EA), alongside Drama, Music and Art. CfE - along with the recently introduced Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012) displays features of a new trend in educational policy wherein the curriculum is explicitly designed with inbuilt openness to enable authorities and schools to engage in reflective, individualised practice, with options to include dance in PE and in the Arts. The recommendation of the previous curriculum in Scotland (5–14 National Guidelines, SOED, 1992) was for every pupil to experience dance through PE. However, in 1995

SOEID stated that dance had suffered serious neglect in many schools. To investigate reasons for this decline in dance MacLean (2007) conducted a longitudinal survey to discover the factors that affect PE students' confidence to teach dance and the role played by practicum and the ITE course in developing such confidence. A survey was administered annually from 2002-2006 tracking 85 students (F = 46, M =39) through their four-year degree programme. In addition, 10 students took part in interviews during their final year of study to ascertain the factors that impinged on their effectiveness when teaching dance. The results identified that previous experience of dance, the university course and a propitious practicum enabled undergraduate students to teach dance in schools. MacLean (2007) identified that student teachers felt confident teaching dance but there were concerns that if opportunities for teaching dance were lacking in schools then teachers' confidence would be severely diminished. In 2010, the Curriculum for Excellence was introduced into Scottish schools in the form of a flexible curriculum framework that was *'less detailed and prescriptive than previous curriculum advice. It provides professional space for teachers and other staff to use in order to meet the varied needs of all children and young people'* (Scottish Executive (2004a, p1). CfE places value on the professional role of the teacher and encourages teachers to translate and personalise the new policy to meet the needs of the learner and the requirements of the school. Teachers are required to exercise agency as they engage in recreating and enacting policy to fit within the opportunities and constraints of the contextual dimensions of their school (MacLean, Mulholland, Gray, Horrell, 2015). In this case, the implementation of dance into both PE and EA could potentially cause PE teachers to design curricula that exclude dance from PE or alternatively use the opportunity to increase dance provision by offering opportunities in both HWB and EA.

To date, little is known about the impact of CfE on the provision and position of dance or the factors that influence teachers to include dance in the curriculum. Therefore, to examine these issues, this research sought to examine current dance opportunities created by CfE in the curriculum through a questionnaire. Factors that enable teachers to achieve agency to teach dance were examined by reinterviewing participants from MacLean (2007) study to reveal the elements that enable teachers to achieve agency to teach dance. The purpose of using the same participants from MacLean's (2007) original study was to permit major themes identified in (2007) to be compared to current themes. Given the complexities that surround the enactment of new policy in PE this paper invites readers to examine teacher agency in the detail of one activity within the PE curriculum. The challenges that PE teachers' face when enacting new curricular policy in their school setting has been discussed elsewhere (see MacLean et al, 2015). However, it is the purpose of this paper to follow the policy journey into the 'context of practice' (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992), examine the curricular decisions that have been made by professionals as a result of CfE and then explore their perceptions of dance in the curriculum. To provide a background for the current study the paper will initially consider the significance of teacher agency within the contextual dimensions of the school as an important factor in enabling teachers to include dance in the curriculum. Subsequently a variety of dance styles and their educational value will be considered by using Mattsson and Lundvall's (2015) pedagogical discourses as a framework for analysis.

Teacher Agency

Wilson, MacDonald, Bryne, Ewing and Sheridan (2008) and Connell (2009) when identifying some of the difficulties in planning, teaching and assessing dance, acknowledge that the

practicalities for teaching dance are more demanding than that of other traditional activities. The planning and preparation that is involved in design and delivery of dance can act as a deterrent, which can result in teachers avoiding the activity. In an already congested curriculum with many competing demands placed on a teachers' time, the preparation element can prove problematic, leaving traditional activities easier to include in the curriculum. Some studies suggest that a number of PE teachers question the position of dance in their subject and lack the confidence to teach it (Lundvall and Meckbach, 2008 and Sanderson, 1996). Certainly the alignment of dance as a separate subject outside of PE, appears to cast doubt on the credibility of PE teachers' ability to teach dance effectively (Connell, 2009). Accordingly, there is an argument, that PE teachers need to be 'up skilled' in dance to increase confidence (Blanche, 2007; Morgan and Bourke, 2008). On the contrary, Wilson et al (2008) suggest that this has no bearing on effective teaching of dance, as research indicates that increased knowledge is not necessary for improved confidence but rather 'a more positive self-image of themselves as teachers' (2008, 366). Research by MacLean (2007) supported that claim, indicating that a strong sense of identity attributed to feelings of confidence when teaching dance. Identity was an unexpected finding and yet;

The student teacher's sense of identity, as teachers of dance, was central to producing feelings of confidence. The historical and cultural context of the students who had a background and interest in the performing arts resulted in an acceptance of dance as a familiar activity that evoked positive attitudes towards dance and feelings of confidence in teaching. Each student teacher's sense of identity was subject to the ways in which the pupils responded to them and in their affirmation and enjoyment of the task set. It became clear that if the student teacher or the activity was met with resistance, then confidence was severely diminished and identity threatened. (MacLean, 2007, p111).

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) suggest that identity and agency are inextricably linked as a realisation of identity, could lead to a heightened sense of agency. Teachers may use their agency to support new policy, develop a critical stance or even oppose educational change altogether (Sannino, 2010). Therefore, an understanding of what contributes to agency provides useful clues into the barriers and opportunities that can add or detract from a teacher's ability to embrace change. Teacher agency has often been inappropriately associated with capacity, which teachers either do or do not possess. However, Priestley, Biesta and Robinson (2015, p34) argue that agency should be regarded '*as something that is achieved in and through concrete context for action*'. Agency in this sense is considered as an ecological ongoing process which can be increased and nurtured in certain contexts, and exists as a configuration of past influences, present engagement and aspirations towards the future (Erimbayer and Mische, 1998). The important point to emphasise is the temporal nature of agency which focus on the factors that inhibit or promote a heightened sense of agency. In simple terms agency unlike capacity is not something that teachers have but rather something to be achieved, 'it denotes a 'quality' of the engagement of actors with temporal-relational contexts for action, not quality of the actors themselves' (Priestley et al 2013, p 3). Therefore, the emphasis shifts from what teachers *have* (capacity) onto what teachers *do* (by means of their environment in and through which they act). This demonstrates why 'capacity' is a misleading measure of teacher ability to teach dance as it places value solely on teacher skills and knowledge rather than the interaction of what the teacher brings

to the situation and the situation brings to the teacher. Therefore, Priestley (2010) suggests we consider those factors that increase teacher agency within the contextual dimensions of the school as a more productive way of understanding why some teachers are enabled to enact policy changes and others feel powerless to do so. It is reasonable to assume that teachers may avoid certain activities and situations that they believe exceed their capabilities. This may result in dance disappearing from the curriculum all together or by simply have a tokenistic inclusion. However, collaborative practices with other members of the PE department may well help teachers to act strategically and enable teachers to achieve agency. Archer (2000) suggest that shared strengths, united goals, collective action and collaborative influence in decision making could result in a 'collective agency' where previous experiences combine, future trajectories seem plausible and current action is shared. Viewing agency in this way helps to explain how *'teachers are able to be reflexive and creative, acting counter to societal constraints, but also how teachers are enabled and constrained by their social and material environments'* (Priestley et al, 2015, p22).

Contextual Dimensions

Priestley (2010) identified certain factors that enable and constrain teachers in their efforts to change the curriculum including cultural, social and material structures. The cultural influences Priestley (2010) refers to are the constraints and opportunities that are already in existence that shape the culture of the school. These might include shared values, knowledge and predominant ideas about PE and dance which contribute to the school culture and are communicated to both teachers and pupils. Social structures are those which exist within the school setting. For example, the school's leadership team may actively encourage the PE department to engage in curriculum innovation by seeking to empower them to teach across the two curricular domains. Social influences could also include the relationships between different key stakeholders, the ethos of the school or the willingness of teachers to be collegial and collaborate with others. Material structures include access to additional PE staff, dance specialists, finance to buy dance packages, the provision of a dance studio, or opportunities to attend Career-Long Professional Learning (CLPL). CLPL is a useful way for teachers to maintain and develop their knowledge in all curricular areas. However, there is a well-documented lack of CLPL in dance (Blanche, 2007; Murphy, Neil and Beggs, 2008; Connell, 2009). This can have an impact on practice as the longer teachers are away from their University training, the less confident they become (Henderson and Rodriguez, 2008). Furthermore, Hennessey, Rolfe and Chedzoy (2001) emphasise that if teachers lack opportunities to teach activities, the positive effects of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) will be eroded. The importance of CLPL therefore cannot be overlooked as appropriate support can develop 'robust, reflective, discursive, collaborative and inclusive teacher identities in practioners' (Kelly, 2006, p515) which is essential when teachers are acting as agents of change.

The Value of Dance

Dance can take a variety of forms from simple spontaneous activity to formalised art or from a social gathering to a theatrical performance. Using Bernstein's (2000) concept of code to examine the function dance serves, Mattsson and Lundvall, (2015) examined the position of dance in pedagogical discourse in Swedish steering documents. They noted dominant discourses that tend to represent the form of dance in schools and the transmission of knowledge that is associated as a result. Several distinct discourses were identified: firstly, a public health discourse; secondly,

an identity formation discourse; and finally, an aesthetic discourse. The public health discourse emphasises dance as a vehicle to stay fit and healthy. However, McFee (1994: 21) points out that this representation of dance is criticised because of its lack of attention to the emotive nature of dance, '*Dance is not just another way of getting exercise...it is not just one activity among many. Dance offers much in the way of emotional education*'. This argument is supported by Gard (2006: 238) who proposes that dance is limited within this discourse as '*simply another context in which skills are developed and a healthier life is lived*'. The identity formation discourse espouses national identity and the transmission of traditions of one's own and other cultures. This type of dance is experienced in Scottish schools because it provides a link to the child's cultural heritage and forms part of the history of human movement and communication (Brinson, 1991). It is this justification which underpins the teaching of Scottish Country dance and provides pupils with insights into their origins, traditions and contextualised history as transmitted from one generation to another (Henderson, 1990). In this way dance can act as a medium for expanding the child's cultural literacy. The aesthetic discourse, which according to Mattsson and Lundvall (2015, p6) valued the '*embodied experience of feelings expressed through movements*', was the least promoted in Swedish steering documents. In PE the inclusion of creative and expressive dance facilitates motor creativity development and the pupils' capacity to think divergently (Torrents, Castaner, Dinusova and Anguera, 2013). Dance in this realm encourages the release of emotion and can be used as a creative means for communicating the inner self (Payne, 1990). Crucially, there is an expectation that creative dance involves pupils in a process that draws on their emotions and ideas in a way which allows children to develop creative movement responses to a given task. The creative realm develops not only critical and analytical thinking in pupils as they respond to problem solving tasks but also requires them to combine ideas whilst cooperating, intervening and modifying those ideas. This helps develop the child's aesthetic and artistic appreciation (McFee, 1994) as pupils learn to value dance as a work of art, learning to interpret the movements and understand the emotions conveyed - developing their physical literacy. In Sweden, the public health discourse was foregrounded with the result that its aesthetic counterpart was marginalised (Mattsson and Lundvall, 2015). The challenge for teachers in Scotland, therefore, is to deliver effective dance courses that contribute to both PE and EA through drawing on the complete range of experiences and depth of understandings that the activity can generate. Whilst, dance shares elements that are associated in a number of other physical activities, Stephens (1991) argues that it makes a unique contribution to the educational process. As a result, it is likely that PE teachers have maintained ownership of dance within the PE curriculum because there is a sense that without it, PE loses some of its value, its purpose, its wholeness and its ability to provide unique experiences that 'add' to the process of what it means to be 'physically educated'.

Purpose

MacLean's (2007) study examined undergraduate PE students' experiences of teaching dance during a practicum in Scottish schools. Despite data being collected when dance was under represented in PE curricula throughout Scotland (SOEID, 1995), the study provided insight into factors that enabled PE undergraduate teachers to teach an activity with which they had only limited familiarity. One of the purposes of this research was to track participants in that original study and re-examine, after ten years, the factors that impinged on their enactment of a newly

created curriculum. This was particularly salient as, for the first time, CfE created scope for dance to be included in both PE and Expressive Arts. Another purpose was to examine dance opportunities created by CfE in the curriculum before identifying and exploring the factors that enable teachers to experience agency when planning, teaching and assessing dance. The intention, therefore, was not to examine the ‘practice’ of teaching but rather to explore the social, cultural and material structures that support teachers in their enactment of policy initiatives and the creation of dance opportunities within their individually designed curricula. Whilst the location of this study is based in Scotland and within a context of curriculum change, there are also some useful insights for the international community.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopted a mixed method survey approach to address three research questions. Firstly, what opportunities have been created for dance in the secondary school curriculum as a result of CfE? Secondly, what were the factors that enable teachers to exercise agency when including dance in the curriculum? Finally, what were the differences between the findings of MacLean (2007) and the current study in relation to dance provision and the factors that enable teachers to teach dance? To address these questions, a questionnaire was designed to gauge dance opportunities within the school context. Factors enabling teachers to teach dance were identified through eight individual semi-structured interviews. Reinterviewing the same participants as MacLean (2007) enabled a number of variables to be controlled such as Initial Teacher Education (ITE) experience and number of years teaching PE. Major themes were able to be analysed and comparisons made between MacLean (2007) and the current study. This served to illuminate the ecological conceptualisation of agency (Erimbayer and Mische, 1998) encompassing teachers' past experiences, current practice and future orientations. The Institute Ethical Committee granted ethical approval and informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to the commencement of the study.

Participants

Survey subjects

85 (58%) of PE teachers invited to be involved in the study (N=147) responded to a self-report questionnaire. All respondents were involved, at varying levels, with mentoring students from an ITE programme and taught pupils across the secondary age range (12-18 years). The sample was representative of both rural and urban schools from thirty-two local authorities in Scotland and included male (N=41) and female (N=44) teachers of a variety of ages (23-60 years), years experience (1-35 years) and level of promotion.

Interview key informants

To provide additional context and enable a comparison between MacLean (2007) and the current study, 8 PE teachers from the south of Scotland who had taken part in the original study were reinterviewed. The participants in the former study (who were 21 years old at the time and had completed the same ITE programme) were purposively selected to ensure a cross-section of male and female respondents, varying in previous experience and practicum. Those participants were tracked and the same procedure was repeated 10 years later. Each interview was conducted at the participant's school and lasted one hour. Four females and four males with 10 uninterrupted years of teaching in a PE department were interviewed. Two participants from the original study were no longer teaching PE and therefore unable to take part in the interview. The aims of the current research were explained to participants and they were invited to withdraw at any time. All interview participants completed the questionnaire before sharing their experiences through interview.

Procedure

Teacher questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed in line with literature relating to the Health and Wellbeing curriculum, Expressive Arts curriculum policy (Scottish Executive 2004a; Scottish Government 2009) and curriculum change (Curtner- Smith 1999; Humes 2003; Scottish Executive 2004b). The initial draft of the questionnaire was sent to two independent researchers experienced in the development, administration and analysis of curriculum-related questionnaires. As a result of their feedback, minor changes to the format and wording of some of the questions were made. The adapted questionnaire was sent to 3 PE teachers for further piloting. They were informed of the purpose of the study and invited to comment on language used, meaning, presentation and the length of time it took to complete the questionnaire. No changes were recommended and the final questionnaire was distributed. The questionnaire comprised three sections designed to gather data in line with the ecological concept of agency (Erimbayer and Mische, 1998) and therefore contained a series of questions about their previous experience, current perceptions and plans for the future. Respondents were invited to respond to a range of closed, open and forced choice (Likert) questions. For example, teachers were asked to respond on a 5-point Likert scale to the question "How would you describe your ability in dance?" where 1 was Poor and 5 was Excellent. To ensure a high response rate and enable teachers across Scotland to participate in the study, PE students delivered and collected questionnaires from the schools in which they undertook practicum. A 58% response rate was achieved with the main reason for non-completion being 'lack of time' during term time. The data gathered were predominantly nominal/ordinal in nature and consequently descriptive statistics were computed. In addition, some open questions were included to allow participants to explain their answer. Finally, SPSS was used to analyse questionnaire data and identify patterns in the variables. A Shapiro-Wilks test was initially used to test for normality and a Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient to identify relationships between variables. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. Finally, the coefficient of determination was calculated to explain shared variance between variables.

Teacher interviews

Teacher interviews followed a similar protocol to MacLean (2007). The interviews sought to explore participant background, experience, and achievement of agency. The questions centered on curriculum design, perceptions of dance and the context that increases teachers' sense of agency. Focused interview schedules (Gordon 1999; Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2000) were developed in a semi-structured interview format with themes, questions and probes (Gilham 2000). During interviewing, detailed field notes were taken and checked with participants for accuracy. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Analyses of the interview data were conducted in five phases. First, transcripts were read and re-read in order to become familiar with participants' responses (Dye 2000). The second phase involved grouping responses according to the research questions to provide a context-specific and focused framework for the analysis (Taylor-Powell and Renner 2003). This enabled a preliminary process of identifying emerging thematic categories which entailed considering the 'text' and developing phrases that explained key issues within the data in order to summarise their meaning and identify the emergence of categories (Glaser 1965; Podlog and Eklum 2006). The third phase involved identifying and further refining the categorisation of key issues discussed by individual participants. The fourth phase of this analysis involved testing the authenticity and robustness of these categories across the interview responses. At this point, the features of all categorical instances were analysed at length until appropriate categorisations were formed (Sproule et al. 2002). The final analysis involved identifying commonalities and differences in teacher responses. This enabled teachers' experiences of teaching dance to be placed alongside their perceptions ten years previously in an attempt to gauge level of congruence. This enabled common themes from both data sets to be compared and contrasted.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results deal with each research area identified previously, firstly curricular dance opportunities, secondly, the factors that enable teachers to achieve agency to teach dance and finally a comparison between current results and those identified by MacLean (2007).

Curricular Dance Opportunities

The implementation of CfE raised concern about whether the introduction of dance into both PE and EA would cause PE teachers to exclude dance from the PE curriculum or use the opportunity to increase dance provision within their school context. Blanche (2007) before the introduction of CfE discussed the tension between dance as an art form (Expressive Arts) and dance within Sport (PE). However, this research, post implementation of CfE, presents a different picture.

Questionnaire results indicated an increase in dance provision with 96% (N=82) of schools including dance in the curriculum with an additional 35% (N=30) offering dance in EA in addition to PE. In these schools, pupils' experienced increased opportunities and exposure to dance as a result of CfE. This result indicates an increase in dance provision in education since the SOEID (1995) report and the introduction of CfE into schools. Only a small minority (2% N=2) of the schools provided no dance in the curriculum. Dance in most schools was designed as part of the core element of PE programme with 82 per cent (N=70) of schools offering dance in Year 1, 2 and 3. Dance as part of a national exam was offered by 33 per cent (N=28) with Higher-level dance being offered by 26 per cent (N=22) of the schools. In addition, 62 per cent (N=53) of schools offered dance in an extra curricular programme either during lunch times or in an after school club. To identify the types of experiences that pupils were experiencing in

dance was important as Mattsson and Lundvall, (2015) identify that dance can serve different functions and transmit associated knowledge. The results from the questionnaire indicated that the styles of dance experienced by pupils were wide and varied, including Hip hop, Street, Jump, Bollywood, Scottish Country dance, Jazz, Interpretive, Ethnic, Contemporary, Breakdance, Ballroom, Ballet and Tap. The interviewees revealed that teachers redesigned the curriculum to include more contemporary forms of dance and as such boys were participating more and resisting less.

“With every activity there is always a small minority that really didn’t (want to take part) but again I always tried to make dance as relevant and as contemporary as I could. So I taught breakdance, not because I thought it was a good idea but because the kids would be able to relate to it and maybe that’s what helped dance to be more popular.” (Male Respondent 7)

This is the strength of a flexible curricular framework that allows teachers to exercise agency to translate and adapt curricular ideas to fit the cultural, social and material structure of their individual school (Priestley 2010). Dance styles could be selected and personalised to accommodate individual preferences across schools. Using Mattsson and Lundvall (2015) paradigms ‘identity formation’ (Scottish Dance) was offered in 74 per cent (N=63) of the schools, and the ‘aesthetic’ discourse (creative dance) offered by 69 per cent (N=59) of schools. The ‘public health’ (dance for fitness) element was offered by 18 per cent (N=16) of schools. MacLean (2007) noted ‘identity formation’ in the form of Scottish Country dance to be the most common form of dance experienced in schools. However, this research provided more balanced results. Further, this also contradicts Mattsson and Lundvall (2015) findings of the discourse analysis of steering documents which favoured the public health discourse as the main knowledge domain in Sweden.

To identify the level of expertise in the PE department, schools were asked to indicate the teacher(s) / specialist(s) who took responsibility for teaching dance. A total of 68 per cent (N=58) of schools expected *all* PE teachers to teach dance in the curriculum, with 7 per cent (N=6) of schools electing female teachers only to teach dance. In 21 per cent (N=18) of schools, one specialist member of the PE department took responsibility for all dance. Only 4 per cent (N=3) employed a dance specialist who was not a qualified PE teacher to teach dance in their school. Whilst there was an expectation for PE teachers to teach dance as part of the curriculum whether it was their specialism or not, this expectation diminished during the senior years of schooling where the teaching of dance became the responsibility of those who were either more confident or more experienced. Frequently, this was limited to one or two members of the PE department. This has led to some criticism in the past (Sanderson 1996), calling for PE teachers to be up skilled in certificated dance (Blanche, 2007; Morgan and Bourke, 2008). However, the effectiveness of any PE department lies within their capacity to work to their strengths and match their expertise to activity in certificated classes. Teachers showed a willingness to learn new skills and receive training to be able to teach dance to certificated level. This research seemed to be the catalyst teachers required to compare their curricular design to other schools by raising awareness of the possibilities the curriculum holds for increased dance provision. This study indicated that in many cases teachers were interested in reviewing their curriculum to include dance in both HWB and EA in the future.

Factors that enable teachers to achieve agency to teach dance.

Teacher Agency

In reviewing teacher agency and the factors that contribute to a teacher's sense of agency, many of the participants mentioned 'feelings of confidence' and a sense that they perceived themselves to be 'able'. Feelings of confidence formed a large part of MacLean's (2007) findings as a factor that would enable teachers to teach dance. Exploration of teacher confidence is not new. Research carried out by Appleton (1995), Mawer (1996), Chedzoy (2000), Rolfe (2001) and MacLean (2007) have provided useful insight into this phenomenon. The questionnaire data in this research indicated that 75 per cent (N= 64) of PE teachers rated themselves as feeling confident to teach dance, with no significant difference in the confidence scores between male and female teachers [$r = .42$, $N=85$, $p < .000$]. Similar results were uncovered in ability in dance with 73 per cent (N=62) of the respondents rating their ability as average to excellent. Furthermore, there was no significant difference in males and females' perceived ability in Dance [$r = .49$, $N=85$, $p < .000$]. The relationship between perceived ability in dance and perceived confidence was investigated using Pearson product-movement correlation coefficient. There was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables [$r = .826$, $N= 85$, $p < .000$] with high levels of confidence associated with high level of perceived ability. The coefficient of determination was calculated and helped to explain 68 per cent shared variance. The results indicated the 'perceived ability' helps to explain nearly 68 per cent of the variance in respondents' scores on the 'perceived confidence' score. Teachers indicated (59%, N=50) that, their perceived confidence to teach dance since leaving ITE had increased. Reasons for this was mainly due to their Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) and opportunities to teach dance in a supportive and collaborative climate. In almost all cases, teachers who said their confidence had decreased (16 per cent, N=2)) was due to limited opportunities to teach dance in school, reinforcing Chedzoy and Burden's (2007) and Hennessey et al's (2001) ideas on the importance of CLPL and practice.

Comparisons from past to present, from student to experienced teacher, highlighted some key differences. The reasons provided for those participants who avoided teaching dance in (2007) were in connection with 'self-preservation', where student teachers were preoccupied with self, their performance and how they would be perceived by their class. This current study indicated a change in perceptions where the experienced teacher was now concerned with the value of children's education.

I'm not an amazing dancer myself. I am not very rhythmical but I can see the value of dance in the curriculum and what it can offer, what it gives to the kids and it does lend itself fantastically well to some of the expectations of the curriculum for excellence and that is why we include it in the PE curriculum (Participant 5: Male)

Established, experienced teachers were no longer influenced by their own sense of identity (MacLean, 2007) but were preoccupied with providing rich educational experiences for their pupils. This was the motivation that led them to learn from their colleagues, attend CLPL or refer certificated classes to those in the department who possessed particular strengths. Teachers reinforced their role as teachers of children and all that this embraces;

I don't see myself as someone that teaches activities. I see myself as

someone who teaches kids. I see myself as someone who goes to teach a class of kids rather than teach children some basketball content. I sort of try to look at the kids' perspective all the time and what they need and what their abilities are rather than thinking 'I've got this dance to teach or I've got this content in basketball to get across. So I see myself as being able to teach kids rather than teach a range of different activities.
(Participant 2: Male)

This research indicated that PE teachers perceived they were able to provide rich, meaningful learning experiences and knew how to create an environment that allowed children to access and experience dance in the curriculum. Where previously student teachers' identity was threatened if the activity of dance was received negatively by pupils (MacLean, 2007, p109), experienced teachers knew how to overcome weaknesses and used specific contextual dimensions in the school to reinforce and support them in their practice.

Contextual Dimensions

In examining the opportunities and constraints within the contextual dimensions of the school, this research identified strong associations with the social and cultural aspects of the school. Participants valued the social and cultural setting of the school as facilitators that enabled them to change the curriculum to include dance. The cultural influences and opportunities that helped promote dance in Scottish schools were situated around the value that the school and teachers placed on the educational worth of dance and as a result, this created a level of expectation amongst their pupils. The majority of schools regarded dance highly, contrasting reports by Smith and Parr (2007) who stated traditional type activities are given precedence in PE with the result that activities such as dance were ignored. There was a sense that dance *added* to the holistic development of the child and helped 'complete' what it meant to be 'physically educated'.

It's probably the best activity where most pride comes as a teacher because you'll see the pupils going on a journey from starting off very timid and being very reverse about it, to thinking, you know what, this is actually great. They (the pupil) are able to put their own stamp on the dance and they genuinely have fun'. (Participant 5: Male)

The cultural expectation of the schools was that dance should be viewed positively and as such they expected all pupils to take part in dance as a compulsory part of the curriculum. In describing the cultural ethos of the school, respondents commented;

There is an expectation from the school that they (pupils) would be doing dance. It's just always been on the curriculum and we just used to teach it like any other activity. We didn't make a show about 'oh we're doing dance today'. It would just be another activity that the boys did and most of them got involved in it'. (Participant 6: Female)

"There was an expectation that everyone just did dance and because the first year boys came in and knew at some point they would be doing dance because their brothers had done dance before them, maybe that expectation took away any sort of mystery about what we were going to be doing in dance"

(Participant 1: Male)

Some schools did not provide dance in first and second year due to the number of activities already included in the curriculum. Alternatively, dance was offered as an optional course in third year, when pupils seemed to show a great interest in dance. This supports Youngman (2007) who reported that when new, non-traditional activities such as dance are introduced into the curriculum, engagement may increase due to heightened interest levels, as the activity is fresh. However, as dance was optional in this instance it would therefore need to be considered whether this only caters for those who have a previous interest in dance rather than allowing all children to experience a wide variety of activities (Scottish Executive, 2004b). Pupil acceptance of dance as an activity was credited to an increase in media attention that was mirrored in the cultural ethos of the school. All schools agreed that at one stage of their career they were evidence of a gender imbalance with a higher female to male ratio opting for dance. However, 5 of the 8 teachers mentioned that boys were now becoming more interested and involved.

If you had asked me that a few years ago I would have said maybe there is (a gender bias) but I think there is so much exposure to the positives associated with dance on the TV. For example that there is as many male dance groups and male dance individuals out there as there are female as far as I can see. I think maybe attitudes are changing. (Participant 8: Female)

Gard (2006) reported limited interest in dance by male pupils. However, it appears there is a shift in male perceptions towards dance supported by the ethos of the school. Teachers linked the positive response of male pupils to the influence and promotion of male involvement in dance through media, where dance was no longer portrayed purely as a feminine activity. Street dance and breakdance were particularly appealing to the young male generation, which espouse a masculine form of dance. This is supported by Blanche (2007) who stated that breakdance is very appropriate in schools and particularly interest's boys. Breakdance was highlighted as a key tool in decreasing resistance from male pupils.

... they (boys) think it's exciting, if they've seen it on TV, ...it's not frowned upon for a first year boy to be doing breakdance cos its quite a strong dance as opposed to any other. (Participant 1: Male)

Using dance as a vehicle to maximise participation in PE was not limited to the boys alone. Girls who were previously disengaged in PE found a renewed sense of ownership in PE through dance.

Girls that were really disengaged in Physical Education came right on board because there was something for them now to the extent where we started having dance leaders and things like that through our core PE. (Participant 3: Female)

The flexible curriculum framework allowed teachers to either offer dance in the PE curriculum, offer dance as part of EA or to include dance within both curricular domains. Within this framework, teachers were able to individualise the curriculum to allow the cultural and social

prominence of the school to dictate dance styles that promoted inclusion and engagement. MacLean (2007) highlighted many gender issues as barriers to children participating in dance. However, dance was presented in the curriculum at a time when The British Arts Council (1993, p4) recognized gender bias in dance by stating ‘popular prejudice aligns dance with femininity and, therefore, dancing for boys is seen as inappropriate’. However, the media’s influence and increased exposure of dance, changed pupils’ mindset and granted permission for them to access dance as a familiar activity. Teachers embraced the change and tailored the dance course to match the contemporary aspirations of the pupils within the cultural environment of the school. As a result, teachers created a climate of expectation and pupils experienced dance as ‘the norm’.

The social structure of the school was seen by teachers as a key factor in facilitating dance within the curriculum and was seen as a support for teachers. In keeping with recent research (Armour and Yelling, 2007; Bowins and Beaudoin, 2011) a social structure within the school which placed value on collaborative practice helped teachers adapt to the changes being presented in the curriculum. All the schools that incorporated dance into the curriculum mentioned collaboration in one form or another, for instance, team teaching, internal CLPL, teacher conversation, shared plans, team teaching etc. One respondent stated that her department had detailed a successful block of plans available for dance, therefore *‘planning time was decreased and confidence increased and teachers felt positive about teaching dance more often, with reduced anxiety’* (Respondent 7 : Male). Many teachers noted a lack of CLPL in dance therefore they used other types of support to increase their knowledge of dance.

I learned a lot from other people and other people hopefully, I’m not sure, learned some stuff from me as well. So that helps as well but most teachers were happy to do dance, learn from each other doing dance. Maybe some people don’t do dance at all but it is certainly a big thing in our school and it is certainly something that everyone does most of the time really well and seem quite confident with it. (Participant 7: Male)

Adams (2011) notes the importance of ‘teacher conversation and professional activity’ as crucial in assisting teachers to adapt to change. This was certainly the case in planning and teaching dance.

We used team teaching, not all the time, but a lot of team teaching and that just used to help to make the dance a bit more fluid. It wasn’t... ‘well one person would have a plan, would lead one week and then the person would the next week’ we would have a plan and would both lead it. (Participant 6: Female)

Collaboration, conversation and professional activity together with a heightened sense of collective agency resulting from group planning and team teaching, became crucial to the success of developing confidence to teach dance. Planning became a collective activity and all teachers benefitted from using a pre-planned programme. This in turn fostered a climate of shared responsibility, confidence, organisation and positivity.

Yeah, everyone just gets on with it when it comes up on their timetable. Don’t get me wrong we’ll have internal CLPL. You know everyone in our

department has a specialty, mine is dance, and we will help each other out when we need to. But we have a pretty good course set in line for the past number of years and everybody is happy with it and we just keep following that same course. So I would say all the staff are really good and they all enjoy teaching dance. (Participant 8: Female)

It was clear that a range of factors acted as facilitators and inhibitors for teachers when teaching dance. It became problematic for teachers to act as agents of change and mediate flexible policy in the absence of opportunities for collaboration. Teachers required discussion on constructing ideas with other colleagues, through the school creating opportunities for collaboration. This supports the findings of Fullan (2003), Johns (2003), Armour and Yelling (2007) and Bowins and Beaudoin (2011), who emphasised the importance of collaboration to help teachers adapt and embrace change. However, this current research reinforces Adams' (2011) research which stresses the importance of 'teacher conversation and professional activity' as crucial in assisting teachers to develop. Individual agency was enhanced in the schools that provided the social structure for innovation, reinforcing Priestley's (2010) notion of the important role of teacher agency in encouraging change. Teachers who were actively working together to plan and teach dance lessons referred to an improvement and increase in confidence and a growth in both individual and collective agency, which resulted in a positive working environment that placed value of the educational significance of dance.

CONCLUSIONS

The introduction of dance into Expressive Arts seemed an apparent manoeuvre to increase the status of dance in schools (Blanche, 2007; Connell, 2009). CfE created opportunities for dance to be included in PE curriculum but also as an independent subject within EA. Previous studies have indicated that dance is lacking in schools. However, this current study presents a more positive picture. Analysis of the questionnaire and interview data showed that, contrary to a number of studies (Chedzoy and Burden, 2007; MacLean, 2007; Wilson et al, 2008), dance currently forms part of the curriculum in a wide number of schools. The results indicated a significant increase in dance provision with 96% of schools including dance in the PE curriculum. In addition, 35% of schools were offering dance in both Health and Wellbeing and the Expressive Arts domain. Furthermore, 53% of schools incorporated dance into their extracurricular programme.

Within the CfE framework teachers were able to individualise the curriculum to allow the cultural and social prominence of the school to dictate dance styles that promoted inclusion and engagement. This is the benefit of a flexible curricular framework that allows teachers to exercise agency to translate and adapt curricular ideas to fit the cultural, social and material structure of their individual school. The most popular forms of dance taught in schools included Scottish Country dance and creative/ aesthetic dance with very few schools using dance as a medium to get fit. This is a change from the previous research (MacLean, 2007) that identified Scottish Country dancing as the most popular form, and sometimes only form, of dance experienced in schools. Male perception of dance seemed to have experienced a positive shift and this was attributed to the increased media influence, pupil exposure towards dance and the cultural structure of the school that regarded dance as a familiar activity in the curriculum.

Teachers' perception of teaching dance contained a complex combination of individual agency, confidence and ability as a configuration of past experience in dance (ITE course and teaching dance in schools), present engagement (creating valuable experiences for pupils) and shared future ambitions (increasing dance opportunities). Teachers' sense of confidence differed depending on their perception of competence, past experiences and resources available. In this situation it would be reasonable to expect teachers to avoid activities that exceed their capabilities. However, this was not the case. In contrast, teachers created a 'collective agency' through collaboration. Teachers were able to act strategically and design curricula that encompassed their collective agency, placing value on shared strengths, united goals, collective action and collaborative planning. The knowledge gained through the experience of teaching dance proved a crucial element in developing confidence. The majority of teachers in this survey perceived themselves to be confident teaching dance, coupled with high perceived ability levels. In almost all cases, teachers who said their confidence had decreased since the last survey attributed this to a lack of opportunities to teach dance in school. CLPL was lacking and to compensate teachers increased their collaboration, conversation and professional activity in terms of planning and team teaching. Planning became a collective activity and all teachers benefitted from using a pre-planned dance programme. This in turn fostered a climate of shared responsibility, confidence, organisation and positivity.

Comparison of the data from past to present, from student to experienced teacher, highlighted some key differences. The reasons provided for those participants who avoided teaching dance differed from the original reasons of 'self-preservation' identified by MacLean (2007). Where previous responses were concerned with the performative nature of the teacher and pupils' resistance to the activity, the factors were now based on how to improve the value of children's education. Established, experienced teachers were no longer influenced by their own sense of identity but were preoccupied with finding ways to provide rich educational experiences for their pupils. Whilst these findings are encouraging and present an optimistic picture of dance in the current curriculum coupled with positive teacher attitudes, further investigation into the actual, rather than the perceived, practice of teachers warrants further investigation. For instance, many teachers commented on planning and teaching, but evaluating for assessing dance was not included in their responses.

Looking to the future, CfE is still 'in flux' as flexible frameworks are continually being re-produced and reassembled in ways that meet the needs of individual pupils. In the current landscape of evolving curriculum policy, where teachers are positioned as 'agents of change', tasked to create individual curricular programmes that meet the needs of the learner and the needs of the school, PE teachers are strategically placed to create learning environments that permits children to fully enjoy dance within the curriculum. It is likely that PE teachers have maintained ownership of dance within the curriculum because there is a sense that without it, PE loses some of its value, its purpose, its wholeness and its ability to provide unique experiences that add to the process of being physically educated. This research seemed to be the catalyst teachers required to compare their curricular design to other schools by raising awareness of the possibilities the curriculum holds for increased dance provision. This study indicated that in many cases teachers were interested in reviewing their curriculum to include dance in both HWB and EA in the future.

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